

**1881:** The White Sisters receive the crucifix and the veil at Notre Dame d'Afrique.

**Letter to his friend Bishop Foulon, Archbishop of Besançon (3 January 1887)**

Reverend and Dear Monsignor,

I am late for New Year's Day, but my excuse is that I am very far away, and I only received your good letter yesterday. I thank your Grace for your best wishes, and I send mine to you in return. They are sincere like old friendships, because, in truth, ours has been going on for almost half a century. Alas! This proves that in this world it will not last much longer, in particular as far as I am concerned, with my facility for burning the candle at both ends. I am here with five secretaries, receiving no one, working continuously ten or twelve hours a day. The reason is that I want absolutely to finish my work which is progressing, but which is far from over. Be aware, dear Monsignor, that, with translation and notes, it will form four volumes in small folio.

On the other hand, it was a very good choice to come to Biskra. You could not imagine what a paradise it is! It was right to choose the palm tree as the symbol of an entrance into heaven. In the last two months that I have been here, just one day with a few hours of rain. All the rest of the time we have enjoyed beautiful sun or a moon and stars that are no less beautiful. A dry climate. The nights are cold, it is true, as well as the mornings, but from eight o'clock to nightfall an average of 20 to 25 degrees of temperature in the open air. So much so that I have not had a single moment of illness or even serious suffering, something that amazes me to the highest degree because I am so used to the opposite.

This is my description given in order to make your mouth water and to punish you for not having promised to go to Carthage at my invitation, to attend my silver jubilee next year, if I am still alive. What you tell me about poor Mgr Soubirane distresses me. The past makes it a duty for me not to interfere, even

indirectly, in his affairs, so I do not know anything specific. Some priests from Belley who are here in Algeria have sometimes wanted to talk to me about this matter. I quickly shut them up. But nothing would surprise me. Farewell, reverend and dear Monsignor. Be assured of my respectful and devoted affection in our Lord.

**New Instructions for the Fathers of the second caravan to Equatorial Africa (January 1879)**

To become fully aware of the problems that a journey through the African populations of Equatorial Africa represents, the moral tendencies of these populations need to be known. On this subject, here are some observations suggested by the accounts of travellers and I believe useful to recall to the Missionaries. According to Livingstone, persistent drive, combined with firmness and patience is indispensable to lead a caravan. Once the Africans notice one or other character weakness, they become unmanageable. Therefore, there is a need when dealing gently with them, never to lack drive. Sometimes this drive has to extend to punishment of the guilty, so as to make an impression on those who would be tempted to imitate them. Burton does not hesitate to say that a beating is required to convince the Africans of one's firm desire to be obeyed. However, I cannot advise the Missionaries enough to abstain from using this means of correction themselves. If required to administer this discipline, it should be carried out by one of the laypersons that accompany them.

